

RDS Center E-Newsletter

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Useful Links:

RDS Center

Home page for the RDS Center
<http://rds.cms.hhs.gov>

CMS Coordination of Benefits/VDSA Web Site

Home page for information on submitting retiree files through the Voluntary Data Sharing Agreement
http://new.cms.hhs.gov/EmployerServices/03_EmployerVDSA.asp

CMS Employer Page

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Web Site specifically for employers
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/EmplUnionPlanSponsorInfo/>

Contact Us:

<http://rds.cms.hhs.gov>
(877) RDS-HELP or
(877) 737-4357
(877)RDS-TTY0 or
(877) 737-8890

RDS Program Web Site Enhancements

As you have probably already noticed, the RDS Program Web Site has changed! Most noticeably we modified the RDS Program Web Site home page to provide important, timely RDS Program announcements with less navigation and scrolling. This change was the result of helpful user feedback from our Plan Sponsor community.

In addition to a new home page, we also reorganized the horizontal menu options to reflect the information referenced most often. For example, items previously under the **Law and Regulations** menu are now under **About RDS**, and the **Events** information is now under **News**.

We hope you find the Web Site enhancements helpful in meeting your RDS program information needs.

Plan Year 2007 Application Deadline

This is a reminder that for plan years ending in 2007, the RDS application-filing deadline is no later than **90 days prior** to the beginning of the plan benefit year. For example, an application for a plan year with a start date of April 1, 2007 and end date of March 31, 2008 must be submitted by midnight, December 31, 2006. If you would like to request a 30-day extension, you must request the extension by the application-filing deadline. For more information on how to request an application extension go to http://www.rds.cms.hhs.gov/how_to/request_extension.htm.

RDS Secure Web Site Change of Information Functionality - *Coming Soon*

The RDS Center is pleased to announce that in early 2006 RDS Secure Web Site Users will be able to change personal information, application information, and reassign Authorized Representatives and Account Managers as necessary. Specifically, users will be able to change personal information such as: e-mail address, phone number, and mailing address. Additionally, users may reassign Designees and change the EFT information on an application. Visit our RDS Program Web Site for the latest information regarding the RDS Program and new RDS Secure Web Site functionality. To visit the RDS Program Web Site go to <http://rds.cms.hhs.gov>.

Unauthorized Access to RDS Secure Web Site

It has come to the attention of the RDS Center that there have been occasions where Authorized Representatives may have shared their Login IDs and/or passwords to allow other individuals to complete the Authorized Representative's registration process, or consent to the Plan Sponsor agreement.

The RDS Center understands that Plan Sponsors have been working diligently to meet the RDS application deadline; however we would like to emphasize that unauthorized access to the RDS Secure Web Site, which includes access by means of another user's Login ID and password, is prohibited by law. Please refrain from sharing RDS Secure Web Site Logon IDs and passwords with anyone.

Vendor Agreement for RDS Program

The RDS Center would like to remind all Account Managers and Authorized Representatives for RDS applicants that, per the Plan Sponsor Agreement, the Plan Sponsor must certify that it has executed a written agreement with its health insurance issuer or group health plan regarding disclosure of information to CMS. In the agreement the issuer or plan must agree to disclose to CMS, on behalf of the Plan Sponsor, the information necessary for the Plan Sponsor to comply with the requirements of the RDS Program. For Plan Sponsors participating in the RDS Program for 2006 plan years, the written agreement is required to be executed prior to **January 1, 2006**.

New RDS Secure Web Site Functionality

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is pleased to announce the addition of new functionality to the Retiree Drug Subsidy (RDS) Secure Web Site. Effective December 1, 2005 Plan Sponsors may download retiree response and notification files from the RDS Secure Web Site, and view notifications about retirees claimed by the Retiree Drug Subsidy Program who attempt to enroll in Medicare Part D.

If you have received an email from the RDS Center indicating a final application determination, the response file for that application is now available. If you uploaded the initial retiree file via the Secure Web Site, the response file is available on the RDS Secure Web Site and may now be downloaded. For more information on retiree response files, go to http://www.rds.cms.hhs.gov/how_to/download.htm. If you sent the initial retiree file via mainframe to mainframe or VDSA the response file has already been sent to the Plan Sponsor by the RDS Center.

The RDS Center will convey notifications and any resulting changes in a retiree's RDS coverage via a Weekly Notification File. Reasons for a change in a retiree's RDS coverage may include but are not limited to: change in Medicare Part A or B enrollment, change in

Medicare Part A or B or eligibility, death of beneficiary, or enrollment in Medicare Part D. For more information on weekly notification files, go to http://www.rds.cms.hhs.gov/how_to/weekly.htm.

For more information on viewing notifications about retirees claimed by the Retiree Drug Subsidy Program who attempt to enroll in Medicare Part D, go to http://rds.cms.hhs.gov/how_to/part_d.htm.

Helpful Tips

This section is intended to provide you with helpful tips about relevant RDS topics. The focus of this 'Helpful Tips' section is the RDS registration and application processes.

- Retiree files must have a valid Unique Benefit Option Identifier (UBOI), i.e., it **must** match the UBOI defined in the application **exactly**. For more information about the importance of the UBOI, go to <http://rds.cms.hhs.gov/news/announcements/uboi.htm>.
- The Authorized Representative is the Business Owner/Officer or Trustee of the Plan. S/he is the person ultimately responsible for all the application information and is required to agree/authorize compliance with RDS Program requirements by signing the Plan Sponsor Agreement and submitting the application. The Authorized Representative must be an employee of the Plan Sponsor with the authority to act on its behalf. For security reasons, the Authorized Representative and the Account Manager must be different people.
- To change the retiree submission method on your application, simply select the Retiree Submission Method link from the Application Status page, and change the retiree submission method accordingly.
- When completing the RDS Secure Web Site registration process, please be sure to enter critical data such as e-mail address, SSN (make sure you include all nine digits), date of birth, and name correctly in the RDS Secure Web Site. This information is used for user authentication and **must** be accurate.
- For information understanding the retiree response file reason codes, go to http://rds.cms.hhs.gov/how_to/download.htm#codes.